

Worksite Wellness Success Stories

June 2008

DNR Financial Services "Healthy Habits Challenge"



A group of us in Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Financial Services started what we call a "Healthy Habits Challenge". This is a program that encourages healthy eating habits and a balanced exercise routine. For example, we must eat 6 fruits and veggies a day, do 30 minutes of cardio five times a week, and drink at least 48 oz of water a day. In addition to the healthy habits that we create for ourselves, we also incorporated a monetary prize for the challenge to help motivate us. Each participant pays \$1 a week, and at the end those with the 3 highest scores win the pot of money. In this challenge we tried not to create rules that prohibited us from negative eating habits or behaviors because a lot of us agreed that when you tell yourself you can't have something, that is when you want it even more. Hopefully though by striving for all of the healthy foods and habits, there won't be as much room for the bad stuff!

We first started by doing a 10 week challenge and decided that was too long. We currently have about eight people doing a 6 week challenge. Click for a look at our "Healthy Habits Challenge" [worksheets](#). One of them explains the program, another is a points keeper form, and the third sheet gives our list of healthier foods that are recommended in your daily diet and serving size information which were taken from medical websites and articles.

After we completed our first 10 week challenge we met to decide what we liked and didn't like about the program and what we might want to change the next time around. A few people had dropped out because it was too hard to keep track of the points, but for the majority of the group we found it very motivating. The challenge is just a helpful reminder of what we should be doing for our bodies on a daily basis and it makes us really conscientious of what we eat. We found that after the challenge ended we slacked on eating our daily fruits and veggies, we didn't drink enough water and we didn't force ourselves to workout like we should. In this latest 6 week challenge we added one additional component which was to cut back on or completely give up a bad habit. It was up to each individual to decide for themselves and they had to keep track of it daily. For example, drink one pop a day instead of three or no eating after 8:00. The feedback so far is good and it's helping kick some of our bad habits one at a time.

-Submitted by Lisa Parker